

18 September 2015

Director – Urban Renewal
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy – Exhibition

The Urban Taskforce has reviewed the Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy and associated documents and provides the following comments for the Department's consideration.

The Urban Taskforce supports the Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor

The Urban Taskforce is generally supportive of the Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy, as this will continue to open up additional land in Sydney's south west for residential development. Our members produce housing across Australia, focussing predominantly in the Sydney Metropolitan Area. They are the risk takers that require consistent, secure decision making from government in order to invest in property development and infrastructure projects. The development of a State-government led urban renewal strategy around the Glenfield to Macarthur rail line is a positive commitment by the government to increasing housing supply and jobs in the Sydney Metropolitan Area.

Height and density around railway stations must be increased

The Urban Taskforce views the Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy as an opportunity for new, high density residential and commercial development in close proximity to key transport nodes. There is significant demand for apartments located close to transport, particularly for young professionals and investors. The areas around some of these stations are large parcels which can easily be developed, not fragmented lots which require significant negotiation with land owners. There is a declining supply of single titled land close to stations which can be redeveloped for residential or commercial development. Permitting additional density around station precincts, particularly high density residential development within an 800 metre radius of stations, presents the opportunity to bring new supply to the housing market and help alleviate the rising cost of housing in Sydney.

Development controls must reflect Campbelltown-Macarthur's role as a Regional City centre

The Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (the Metro Strategy) recognises the important role the Campbelltown-Macarthur Regional Centre plays in the development of Greater Metropolitan Sydney, by focussing jobs and services in this centre to service outer suburban communities.

Campbelltown-Macarthur is vital to supporting new communities in the south west growth centres. Significant health and education precincts will be developed close to this centre, around the University of Western Sydney and Campbelltown Hospital. Campbelltown-Macarthur will also service the population of the Greater Macarthur Urban Investigation Area when this site is developed in the future. Campbelltown Macarthur's close proximity to Badgerys Creek Airport will attract additional employment opportunities and demand for housing, as well the Business Park (currently under investigation) and the close proximity of the centre to the planner Outer Sydney Orbital Road.

Demographic evidence presented in the Campbelltown Precinct Land Use and Infrastructure Analysis indicates there are a higher than average number of single person or two person households in this area.

Given demographic characteristics of the population, and the influx of infrastructure, employment opportunities and services which are anticipated to develop within or close to the Campbelltown-Macarthur Regional Centre in the near future, it is vital that plans and development controls for Campbelltown and Macarthur maximise the use of these sites. In particular, high-density development with appropriate heights and floor space ratio controls should be permitted on all residential land within an 800 metre radius of these stations.

Consultation with industry and input to test financial viability

The majority of the Corridor Strategy aims to redevelop existing infill sites. The Department of Planning and Environment and local councils must understand that initiating policies to encourage greater infill development does not ensure the implementation of these policies by the private market. There are numerous barriers to infill development which do not appear to be taken into consideration when considering infill strategies, such as this Corridor Strategy. These include:

- Commerciality of infill development. It may not always be financially feasible to develop identified infill sites. Infill sites have high land and construction costs, particularly for medium and high density dwellings. Demolition costs must also be factored in.
- Availability of sites. Securing sites of an appropriate size, in an appropriate location and a reasonable price can also be difficult. At times it can be hard to secure a group of houses required to redevelop an area on a suitable scale.
- Market preference – the type of dwelling developed in an area needs to meet the expectations of the market. Planning controls often do not permit the type of product demanded by the market in the right location.

Regular, ongoing communication with the industry, through meetings, workshops, seminars and committees will assist greatly in developing strategies and plans that are will be acceptable to both the property industry, the community and councils in delivering outcomes.

Development controls must be achievable

At various times our members have mentioned that there is a mismatch between the proposed height and floor space ratios for precinct plans developed by the Department or other agencies. The most common complaint is that the floor space ratio is too high for the permissible height. Redevelopment is not likely to occur on these sites as the FSR is not achievable. If redevelopment does occur, it is often of poor quality due to design strategies such as deep floor plates and / or siting the building below the street level, are used to

achieve the permissible FSR. Both scenarios result in poor building design with compromised daylight and natural ventilation, awkward room layouts that may be difficult to use, and often negative impacts on neighbours or the streetscape. In order to avoid this, we suggest that development controls are rigorously tested and height controls extended where possible to ensure the permissible FSR can be achieved.

In summary, the Urban Taskforce is supportive of the Corridor Strategy and is happy to continue working closely with the Government to provide a development industry perspective on this issue. Please feel free to contact me on telephone number 9238 3927 to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Urban Taskforce Australia



Chris Johnson AM

Chief Executive Officer